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CITY OF TRURO



Annual Reports

OF THE

Medical Officer of Health:

V. E. WHITMAN, B.Sc., M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P., D.P.H.,

AND

Sanitary Inspector:

H. C. LISTER, M.S.I.A.

FOR THE YEAR ENDING

31st DECEMBER 1951.

OSCAR BLACKFORD LIMITED, PRINCES STREET, TRURO.

PUBLIC HEALTH COMMITTEE, 1951.

The MAYOR OF TRURO (Councillor H. B. TREWHELLA)

Chairman: Councillor S. Orchard.

Vice-Chairman: Councillor R. J. Williams.

Aldermen:

A. A. Behenna; W. H. Cornish.

Councillors:

H. J. P. Teague; R. G. Jordan; A. Phillips; W. A. Fillbrook;
R. Richards; Mrs. D. Wilson.

STAFF OF THE PUBLIC HEALTH DEPARTMENT:

Medical Officer of Health:

V. E. Whitman, B.Sc., M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P., D.P.H.

Sanitary Inspector:

H. C. LISTER, M.S.I.A.

CITY OF TRURO

Annual Report of the Medical Officer for the year ending 31st December, 1951.

Mr. Mayor, Mrs. Wilson and Gentlemen;

I have the honour to present my Annual Report on the health of the City of Truro during 1951.

The vital statistics set out in detail in the body of the report call for no particular comment. The Death Rate is slightly up on 1950 but is below that for the whole country. The Birth Rate was a little higher and the Infant Mortality Rate somewhat lower. The higher death rate was due to increases in the number of deaths from Tuberculosis, vascular diseases of the nervous system, coronary disease and heart disease with hypertension. Of the 7 deaths stated to be due to tuberculosis only one was due to acute recent infection, one was fairly recent (4—5 years) and the others were longstanding cases. The figure that really matters in tuberculosis is the number of new cases discovered during the year. This was 15 or 1.14 per thousand of population as compared with the rate of 0.9 per thousand for the whole County. (These figures should be borne in mind when reading Mr. Lister's report on the housing survey which he has been making). Deaths from the other conditions listed are not considered, at present, to be preventable.

The number of cases of infectious disease notified was higher than in 1950 but there was no epidemic of any kind and the year can be considered to have been a healthy one. It might be as well to mention in passing the notification of four cases of Sonné Dysentery which is becoming increasingly common in Great Britain. Dysentery is a bowel disease. The causal organism is well known and the mode of spread is chiefly by dirty hands and dirty habits. It is disturbing that a disease so definitely associated with filth should be on the increase in these days.

Mr. Lister has been responsible for the report on the Sanitary circumstances in the Area. I think you will agree that he has accomplished a very great deal during the year. The facts revealed by the Housing Survey speak for themselves but I would be failing in my duty if I did not urge once again the importance of completing this work as soon as possible. It is quite probable from the figures already obtained that the rate at which houses are falling into dilapidation exceeds the rate of new construction. If this is indeed the case it seems to me that the sooner we know the facts the sooner we can consider what measures are called for to stop the rot.

I should like to acknowledge here my appreciation of the help

and consideration I have received from the Chairman and Members of the Health Committee and my thanks to Mr. Lister for his loyal co-operation.

I have the honour to be

Mr. Mayor, Mrs. Wilson and Gentlemen,

Your obedient servant,

V. E. WHITMAN,
Medical Officer of Health.

GENERAL STATISTICS

Area of City (acres)	...	2,450
Population (mid 1951)	...	13,120
Number of inhabited houses	...	3,905
Rateable value	...	£87,835
Product of penny rate	...	£345
Number of houses built, or under construction since 1945		300
Number of families on waiting list for houses	...	580

VITAL STATISTICS

Live Births

Males 87	Females 111	Total 198
Registrar General's " Area Comparability Factor "	...	1.01
Birth rate, per 1,000 population—Truro	...	15.1
Birth rate, per 1,000 population—England and Wales	...	15.5

Still Births

Males 4	Females 1	Total 5
Still birth rate, per 1,000 all births—Truro	...	24.6
Still birth rate, per 1,000 all births—England and Wales		22.9

Deaths

Males 80	Females 82	Total 162
Registrar General's " Area Comparability Factor "	...	1.01
Death rate, per 1,000 population—Truro	...	12.3
Death rate, per 1,000 population—England and Wales	...	12.5

Deaths of Infants under 1 year

Males 5	Females 1	Total 6
Infant mortality rate, per 1,000 live births—Truro	...	30.3
Infant mortality rate, per 1,000 live births—England and Wales	...	29.6

ANALYSIS OF CAUSES OF DEATH

	1950	1951
Tuberculosis, respiratory ...	2	7
Tuberculosis, other ...	1	—
Syphilitic diseases ...	1	1
Diphtheria ...	—	—
Whooping cough ...	—	—
Meningococcal infections ...	—	—
Acute poliomyelitis ...	—	—
Measles ...	—	—
Other infective and parasitic diseases	—*	2
Malignant neoplasm, stomach ...	5	6
Malignant neoplasm, lung, bronchus	3	3
Malignant neoplasm, breast ...	4	5
Malignant neoplasm, uterus ...	1	2
Other malignant and lymphatic neoplasms ...	9	7
Leukaemia, aleukaemia ...	—	—
Diabetes ...	2	1
Vascular lesions of nervous system ...	18	23
Coronary disease, angina ...	8	19
Hypertension with heart disease ...	3	7
Other heart disease ...	28	26
Other circulatory disease ...	4	3
Influenza ...	—	1
Pneumonia ...	7	6
Bronchitis ...	6	5
Other diseases of respiratory system ...	1	1
Ulcer of stomach and duodenum ...	1	1
Gastritis, enteritis and diarrhoea ...	—	1
Nephritis and nephrosis ...	1	1
Hyperplasia of prostate ...	3	1
Pregnancy, childbirth, abortion ...	1	—
Congenital malformations ...	2	2
Other defined and ill-defined diseases	34	24
Motor vehicle accidents ...	1	—
All other accidents ...	3	7
Suicide ...	4	1
Homicide and operations of war ...	—	—
	<hr/> 153 <hr/>	<hr/> 162 <hr/>

DEATHS IN AGE GROUPS

		M.	F.	Total
0 +	...	5	1	6
1— 4	...	1	—	1
5—14	...	—	1	1
15—24	...	1	—	1
25—44	...	3	7	10
45—64	...	22	18	40
65—74	...	26	14	40
75 +	...	22	41	63
		—	—	—
		80	82	162
		—	—	—

63.8% of the deaths were of persons over 65 years of age.

GENERAL PROVISIONS OF THE HEALTH SERVICE

1. Clinics

Child Welfare. The average attendance fell to under 21 per session. The average for 1949 was over 47 and for 1950 under 28. No improvement can be expected unless we get less unsatisfactory premises and fewer changes of staff.

Dental. Mr. K. Batten, Chief Dental Officer, Cornwall County Council, has written as follows:—

Truro Dental District.

As it has been impossible to attract additional dental officers during the year it has been impossible to carry out any annual routine inspections and treatment in many dental districts, one of these being Truro. The time available has been completely filled up by patients who have applied for treatment. The following table shows the number of School Children, Expectant and Nursing Mothers, and Pre-school Children treated during the year:—

		School Children	Expectant & Nursing Mothers	Pre-School Children
Inspected	...	827	13	28
Requiring Treatment	...	774	13	26
Number of Persons Treated	...	688	12	26
Attendances made for Treatment	...	1,350	87	38
Made dentally fit	...	330	12	17

2. Ambulance Service

	1950	1951
Ambulances ...	5	6
Utilecons ...	3	4
Patients carried, ambulances ...	4,221	4,565
Patients carried, utilecons ...	8,682	9,599
Patients carried, Hospital Car Service	2,910	1,723
Miles travelled, ambulances ...	66,698	70,901
Miles travelled, utilecons ...	81,685	94,314
Miles travelled, Hospital Car Service	85,594	48,555

3. Home Help Service

The establishment of Home Helps was five. Help was given in their own homes to 15 maternity and 44 other cases during the year.

4. After-Care Grants

Free grants of extra nourishment were made to 11 tubercular patients on the recommendation of the Chest Physician.

5. Laboratory Facilities

The Truro Public Health Laboratory examined and reported on 49 samples of ice cream and 38 samples of water during the year.

6. Water Supply

All samples taken during the year were bacteriologically satisfactory. Considerable improvements were effected at the Water Works.

7. Home Nursing, Midwifery & Health Visiting

Miss Margaret Gray, Assistant County Nursing Officer, reports:—
“ The shortage of Nursing and Health Visiting staff in Truro has made this a difficult year. The domiciliary visiting of young children has fallen sadly into arrears. It is hoped there will be more continuity in future.”

General cases nursed ...	241
General nursing visits ...	6,213
Midwifery cases ...	106
Midwifery visits ...	2,464
Ante natal visits ...	691
Health visits to children under 5 years	4,530

PREVALENCE AND CONTROL OF INFECTIOUS DISEASES

Age Group	Scarlet Fever		Whooping Cough		Acute Poliomyelitis		Measles	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
0— 1	—	—	1	3	—	—	3	—
1— 2	—	—	5	1	—	—	6	3
3— 4	—	1	6	14	—	—	9	2
5— 9	—	—	7	7	1	—	6	5
10—14	—	—	1	1	—	—	—	1
15—24	—	—	1	1	—	—	—	1
25 +	—	—	2	2	—	—	—	—
Age unknown	—	2	—	—	—	—	—	—
	—	3	23	29	1	—	24	12
Totals	3		52		1		36	

Age Group	Acute Pneumonia		Erysipelas		Puerperal Pyrexia	Dysentery	
	M	F	M	F	F	M	F
0— 4	—	—	—	—	—	2	1
5—14	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
15—44	—	—	—	—	2	—	1
45—64	1	—	—	—	—	—	—
65 +	—	1	—	—	—	—	—
Age unknown	—	—	—	1	—	—	—
	1	1	—	1	2	2	2
Totals	2		1		2	2	

Immunisation against Diphtheria

140 children under 5 and 8 children between the ages of 5 and 14 were immunised. 505 booster doses were given.

It was estimated that on 31st December, 1951, there were 732 children in Truro between the ages of 15 months and 5 years. Of these 273, or 37.3%, had been protected against Diphtheria by immunisation. This sharp fall in the immunisation rate is due to the decision to accept written records only as evidence of protection. In numerous instances parents affirm that immunisation has been done but in the absence of written proof these cases have not been included. In addition there has been some falling off in the number of children immunised and this is probably due to the shortage of Health Visitors.

Vaccination against Smallpox

		Under 1	1—4	5—14	15 +	Total
Number vaccinated	...	2	55	11	60	128
Number re-vaccinated	...	—	—	1	155	156

The increase in the number of primary vaccinations may appear at first sight to be encouraging but it cannot be too strongly emphasised that the optimum age for first vaccinations is between 2 and 6 months. At these ages the dangers of vaccination are infinitesimally small and subsequent re-vaccinations are equally safe at any age.

Tuberculosis

Age Group	New Cases				Deaths			
	Pulmonary		Non-Pulmonary		Pulmonary		Non-Pulmonary	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
0 +	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
1— 4	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—
5—14	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
15—24	2	1	—	—	—	—	—	—
25—34	2	2	—	—	—	2	—	—
35—44	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
45—54	1	2	—	—	—	1	—	—
55—65	3	—	—	—	2	1	—	—
65 +	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—
	9	5	—	1	2	5	—	—
Totals	14		1		7		—	

The number of tubercular patients on the register on 31st December, 1951, was 77 respiratory and 15 non-respiratory, making a total of 92 cases. This gives an incidence of 7.0 known cases per 1,000 population.

At the end of 1951, 13 children had received B.C.G. vaccination. These were all contacts of known cases of tuberculosis. It is hoped that when all contacts have been protected it will be possible to offer vaccination with B.C.G. to all children and adolescents.

CITY SANITARY INSPECTOR'S REPORT, 1951.

The Mayor, Aldermen and Councillors,
Madame and Gentlemen,

I beg to submit my report for 1951 as follows:

Housing:

The Survey has continued during the year, as time has permitted, and although the number of inspections carried out is almost twice that of last year, I still regard the progress made as disappointing. But far more disappointing is the progress made in the field of rehousing. The City Council, after exerting every effort, is unable to rehouse occupants living in cottages in respect of which demolition orders are operative—so acute is the need of so many of the applicants on the Council Housing List. Most people had thought it reasonable to suppose that some real progress would have been made by now particularly with regard to the clearance of certain areas of slum property which can only be considered as a blot on the landscape in every way. Any concerted and planned effort in this direction seems as far away as ever. In some ways shelter and a home of one's own, whatever form it may take, is to be preferred to crowding still another family on to the parents or in-laws and the domestic disturbance which is almost bound to follow. It would seem that any implementation of the survey is still very much a task for the future.

The County Planning Committee are preparing a plan of Truro indicating the premises to be demolished as falling in two broad categories; (a) 0—5 years and (b) 5—20 years, and consultation with the Officers of the City Council has taken place on the subject. The demolition of the properties so listed within the time stated, to my mind, is extremely unlikely. Only a far greater output of houses, both by local authorities and private enterprise can make this possible.

SANITARY ARRANGEMENTS.

1	2	3	4	5	6
Total No. of houses	Houses sharing W.C. accommodation	W.C's having no flush	W.C's having old & obsolete cased in hopper basins	Houses without sinks	Water supply from tap in yard
212(408)	29(96)	40(63)	74(121)	137(258)	107(214)

FUTURE PROGRAMME

7	8	9
Houses ripe for demolition as soon as conditions permit	Houses requiring probable works of conversion & reconditioning	Back to back (included in columns 7 or 8)
81(108)	12(43)	13(40)

The figures in brackets denote the total since the survey commenced in 1949. It is again to be noted that the figures given under the heading of Future Programme in columns 7 and 8 are very provisional as many under column 8 may revert to column 7 on the ground of cost on the completion of the detailed schedules of work to be carried out.

As a matter of interest it is to be noted that the number of houses with W.C's. having no flush is unusually high, and shows considerable fluctuation in different parts of the town, on the other hand the high proportion of houses without sinks and with external water supply remains steady.

Action under Section II:

In the case of three houses, reports were made that the houses were unfit for human habitation and were not capable at a reasonable expense of being rendered so fit. As a result notices were served under the above Section, and the City Council accepted undertakings from the owners concerned that the houses should not be used for human habitation until the Council were satisfied that the houses had been rendered fit and until the Council has cancelled the undertakings. At the end of the year the reconditioning work to the three properties had commenced. This involved the conversion of one of these houses with another (in respect of which an undertaking had been entered upon in 1950) into one dwelling. The work to the other two will entail straightforward reconditioning.

Inspection of the District:

The following Visits and Inspections have been made:—

1. Public Health Act, 1936

(a) Housing	...	198
(b) Drainage (including nuisances from overflowing cesspools)	...	213
(c) Sanitary Accommodation (including Schools)	...	25
(d) Water Supply (including the collection of Samples)		38
(e) Water Courses	...	—
(f) Keeping of Animals	...	13
(g) Accumulations	...	4
(h) Infestations (Dirty or verminous premises)	...	15
(i) Infectious Diseases	...	7
(j) Cinemas	...	3
(k) Moveable Dwellings	...	15
(l) Public Health Miscellaneous	...	16

2. Milk & Dairies Regulations ... 21

3. Housing Act		
(a) Rehousing	...	103
(b) Inspections (including survey in progress)	...	273
4. Food & Drugs Act		
(a) Food including Condemnations	...	108
(b) Premises	...	21
(c) Ice-cream Sampling and Inspections	...	78
(d) Meat	...	8
5. Factories Act	...	7
6. Shops Act	...	9
7. Rodent Control	...	118
8. Miscellaneous (including Hackney Carriages)	...	75
	Total	1,368

PUBLIC HEALTH ACT, 1936

Informal Action

Owners Notified					Work Completed				
Sec. 39	Sec. 44	Sec. 45	Sec. 93	Sec. 93	Sec. 39	Sec. 44	Sec. 45	Sec. 93	Sec. 93
			(Housing)	(General)				(Housing)	(General)
20	5	11	41	11	15	3	5	29	10

Formal Action.

Notices Served					Work Completed				
Sec. 39	Sec. 44	Sec. 45	Sec. 93	Sec. 93	Sec. 39	Sec. 44	Sec. 45	Sec. 93	Sec. 93
			(Housing)	(General)				(Housing)	(General)
4	—	1	11	1	3	—	1	8	1

In one instance, following the service of a formal notice under Section 93, the owner concerned reported that she was not in a position to meet the cost of repairs. In order to assist her, and by agreement, the City Council executed the work, and agreed to recover the cost over a period of years; in another case two adjoining owners failed to reach agreement in the matter of the repair of a lead valley common to both properties, and in this case the Council carried out the work by agreement and recovered the cost in equal proportions. The City Council also executed work in default in one instance under Section 39 of the Act.

MEAT AND FOOD INSPECTION:

During the year the following was condemned:—

1 Sows Head (30 lbs.)	...	Putrefaction
41 lbs. Shoulder of Meat	...	Bruised and full of clotted blood
10 lbs. Surloin Trimmings	...	Injury
5½ lbs. Bovine Tongue	...	Unidentified nodular encapsulation
1 Turkey (10½ lbs.)	...	Crop dropsy

Other Food:

108 tins Milk	1 tin Brisling
294 tins Vegetables	5 Pkts. Semolina
51 tins Fish	1 Pkt. Self-Raising Flour
326 tins Soups	3 Tubes Junket Powder
576 tins Preserves	1 tin Potato Crisps
354 tins Meat	8½ doz. Soreen Whipping Cream
55 Jars Pickles	3 tins Golden Syrup
15 Kilos Peach Pulp	1 lb. Coconut
67 Kilos Apricot Pulp	8 Portions Cheese
8 Kilos Blackcurrant Pulp	2 bottles Blackcurrant Wine
7¼ lbs. Sandwich Cake	128 Pkts. Gravy Salt
1 Chocolate Cream Roll	8½ doz. Jars Sandwich Spread
3 Steak Pies	8 Jars Maltoline
2 x 6 oz. Boxes Cheese	1 Pkt. Bisto
7 trays Peaches	4 Pkts. Sponge Mixture
6 doz. Cheese Spread	1008 lbs. Lincoln Cream Biscuits
11 lbs. Shoulder Bacon	3¼ doz. Pkts. Pudding Mixture
19½ lbs. Gammon	33 lbs. Salmon
10 stone Cod Fillets	4 Pkts. Corn Flakes
114 lbs. Pears	1 Pkt. All-Bran
4 lbs. Madeira Cake	2 Plum Puddings
1 bottle Rennet	9 lbs. Chitterlings
5 lbs. Hogs Pudding	12 lbs. Luncheon Meat
5½ lbs. Cheese	48 lbs. Jellied Veal
1 tin Nescafe Coffee	2613 lbs. Cooked Ham
1 tin Roes	

Your Committee, in common with those of other Authorities, was concerned at the quantity of imported canned hams which had been subject to condemnation. I was directed to write to the appropriate Ministry on the subject. It appears that the Ministry is not responsible for the purchase, importation or distribution of canned hams—they are brought in by private traders until recently under open general licence and now on a quota basis. The Ministry is however concerned with the “official certificate” which is required by the Public Health (Imported Food) Regulations, 1937 and 1948 to accompany every consignment of meat products imported into the

United Kingdom. This certificate is a guarantee given by a competent authority in the exporting country that every precaution has been taken in the preparation of the meat products so as to prevent any possible danger to public health. The Ministry had, therefore, taken the matter up with the Governments of the exporting countries, and a Ministry representative went to France and Germany to discuss the matter.

The Ministry point out that it is possible that the hams may have deteriorated in this country, either from being kept too long or through being badly stored. They are only guaranteed for a period of 3—6 months.

Ice-Cream:

48 samples of Ice-cream were taken during the year, and the result can be regarded as reasonably satisfactory. The grading recorded was as follows:—

Grade 1	...	36
Grade 2	...	2
Grade 3	...	8
Grade 4	...	2
		—
		48
		—

The ten samples falling in Grades 3 and 4 involved four producers—3 producing outside the area. In the case of the local producer inspections were carried out, and in the other cases the matter was referred to the appropriate quarters. By the end of the season all four producers had reached the first grade.

Drainage:

Cesspools—The year has seen heavy service by the City Council's cesspool emptier, and a considerable increase on the number of cesspools emptied was recorded in addition to which the vehicle was hired out to an adjoining Authority for a total period of seven days. During the year 536 cesspools were emptied, and of this total 169 were on the Hillcrest-Sunningdale area and this showed an increase of 136 on the previous year. By the end of the year, although the road was still to be made up, the sewer was laid in Dobbs Lane. It would appear that the demand on the services of the cesspool emptier will not be lessened to the degree at one time thought, by the connection of the Hillcrest and Sunningdale Estate to the main drainage system. Of the 136 additional emptyings made during the year only 38 of these were on these Estates. It is known that many of the older cesspools are not watertight and for many years the contents have found a natural outlet through the subsoil, but with the passage of time this natural outlet has been almost "sealed off" with the result that these cesspools are now in need of more frequent emptying.

FACTORIES ACT, 1937 and 1948 — 1. INSPECTIONS

Premises	M/c line No. (2)	No. on Regis- ters (3)	Inspec- tions (4)	Number of Written Notices (5)	Occupiers prosecuted (6)	M/c line No. (7)
1. Factories in which Sections 1, 2, 3, 4 & 6 are to be enforced by L. Authorities ...	1	28	—	—	—	—
2. Factories not included in 1. in which 7 is enforced by Local Authorities ...	2	87	7	1	—	—
3. Other premises in which Sec. 7 is enforced by Local Authorities ...	3	1	—	—	—	—
TOTAL ...		116	7	1	—	—

2. CASES IN WHICH DEFECTS WERE FOUND.

Particulars	M/c line No.	Number of cases in which defects were				No. of
		Found	Remedied	Referred to H.M. Inspector	by H.M. Inspector	Prosecu- tions
Sanitary Conveniences (S.7)						
(a) insufficient ...	9	—	—	—	—	—
(b) unsuitable or defective ...	10	1	1	—	—	—
(c) not separate for sexes ...	11	—	—	—	—	—
Other offences against the Act (not includ- ing offences relating to Outwork) ...	12	—	—	—	—	—
TOTAL ...		1	1	—	—	—

PREVENTION OF DAMAGE BY PESTS ACT, 1949

	Type of Property				TOTAL
	Local Authority	Dwelling Houses	Agri- cultural	All other (including Business & Industrial)	
1. Total number of properties in L.A. District ...	25	3,905	26	822	4,778
2. Number of properties inspected during 1951 as a result of (a) notification or (b) otherwise	(a) — (b) 25	15 600	3 7	9 13	27 645
3. Number of properties (under 11) found to be infested by rats	Major 1 Minor 11	— 21	1 3	2 15	4 50
4. Number of properties (under 11) found to be seriously infested by mice ...	—	1	—	1	2
5. Number of infested properties (under 3 and 4) treated by the Local Authority ...	12	21	3	13	49
6. Number of notices served under Section 4:—					
(1) Treatment ...	—	—	2	—	2
(2) Structural Works (i.e. Proofing) ...	—	—	—	—	—
7. Number of cases in which default action was taken by Local Authority following issue of notice under Section 4 ...	—	—	2	—	2
8. Legal Proceedings ...	—	—	—	—	—
9. Number of "block" control schemes carried out ...	5				

The Shops Act, 1950:

As I did not comment on this Act in last year's report I think that some remarks made now would not be out of place. This Act came into force on the 1st October, 1950. It is a consolidating Act, repealing and replacing the Shops Acts of 1912 and 1936, and other legislation relating to Shops including Defence Regulations 60 AB.

There does appear to be some confusion amongst Shopkeepers so far as the weekly half holiday is concerned. The law is quite specific; every shop (there are exemptions) shall be closed for the serving of customers not later than one o'clock in the afternoon on one weekday in every week, and the Local Authority may fix, by order, the day on which shops are to be closed. The City Council have made no such order and therefore Shopkeepers may by notice specify their own early closing day. The Local Authority can only make such an order when they are satisfied that the majority of the Shopkeepers concerned are in favour. There is no evidence that this is so, so far as Truro is concerned.

The trades exempted from the provision of the Act relating to the weekly half-holiday include those engaged in the sale of confectionery, meat, milk, vegetables, tobacco and smokers requisites, newspapers and periodicals, etc.

